

SITUATION REPORT NO. 4
INCIDENT NO. 2006-020
DATE: July 20, 2006 Time 5:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck ND 58505

1. **NATURE OF DISASTER:** **Statewide Fires** – Dry conditions, high fuel content and gusty winds have contributed to the rapid spread of fires ignited by various sources including thunderstorms, agricultural operations and human error.
2. **DEATHS AND INJURIES:** No changes from previous reports.
3. **DAMAGES:** On July 20, firefighters continued to make progress battling the Lund Fire in Sioux County, reaching 80 percent containment. Officials for the N.D. Forest Service indicated, through the use of a global positioning system (GPS), responders determined the fire burned 10,500 acres of rough terrain, pasture and grassland. Firefighters achieved approximately 75 percent containment on the adjoining Stone Church Fire in South Dakota. Dozers have been used to make a fire break around the perimeter of the fire. Crews will start mop-up with a 25-foot perimeter and move inward. N.D. Forest Service (NDFS) officials described weather conditions on scene as conducive to firefighting efforts; temperatures and wind speed are down, humidity is up.

A high pressure system will move east over the state as a low pressure system develops in Montana, according to National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts. Light winds are expected to raise low level humidity values with dew point temperatures rising into the 50s. The afternoon relative humidity values will be 30 to 35 percent, along with increasing clouds in the west, which will keep the North Dakota Fire Danger Index below the very high category in the far west. The fire danger index will be in the very high category in the south central zones because of fewer clouds in the afternoon and slightly drier surface humidity.

There is a chance of thunderstorms in the western part of North Dakota this afternoon and statewide tonight as an upper level disturbance moves from Saskatchewan southeastward across the Dakotas.

The outlook for July 21 calls for lighter winds, partly cloudy skies, and high temperatures from the upper 70s to lower 80s this should keep the fire danger index below the very high category across the state.

Fires reported to the State Operations Center (SOC) since the last Situation Report dated July 19 include: Billings (1), Bowman (3), Dunn (1), Emmons (2), Grant (2), Hettinger (1), McIntosh (2), Sargent (1), Sheridan (1), Stark (1), Mclean\Burleigh county line (1).

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No changes from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Governor John Hoeven on July 20 participated in an aerial reconnaissance of the Lund Fire site and met with tribal officials at Fort Yates. Joining Hoeven on the tour was Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman; N.D. Division of Homeland Security Director; and other state officials.

On July 20, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) turned over Incident Command of this fire to the Rocky Mountain Area Interagency Type II Incident Management Team (IMT) specializing in battling large scale fires. The IMT will coordinate resources to combat the Lund Fire as well as the Stone Church Fire in South Dakota. The Type II IMT, consisting of 42 fire professional, has ordered 20 additional engines with BIA ordering 15 more. The combined assets will battle both fires. The fire crews have been briefed on all historical sites and measures necessary to protect them. Existing North Dakota crews will continue to assist in battling the Lund Fire at Ft. Yates.

The following counties have issued burn bans Grand Forks County on July 20 and Stark County on July 17.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.

8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.

9. OTHER INFORMATION: The Rangeland Fire Index can be obtained on the internet at the N.D. Department of Emergency Services web site at www.nd.gov/des/info/firedanger.html or the NWS website www.crh.noaa.gov/bis/fire.php.

The N.D. Department of Emergency Services Situation Reports are posted on the Departments Internet home page. The address is <http://www.nd.gov/des>.

Greg Wilz, State Director